

Introducing our ‘UK Elections 2016’ series



In the run up to May's elections and the EU referendum in June, British Government @ LSE will be posting a series of articles on GovBlog, providing expert analysis on the various contests. Tony Travers and Martin Rogers introduce our 'UK Elections 2016' series.

An election rich year for the UK

2016 is an election-rich year in the United Kingdom. There will be parliamentary or assembly polls in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on 5 May. In London, the mayor and assembly are up for election. On the same day there will be local government polls in many parts of England, plus police & crime commissioner elections. Seven weeks later, on 23 June, the European Union in-out referendum will occur.

The leaders of both the Conservative and Labour parties may face challenges to their position between now and the end of the year. Prime Minister David Cameron could be damaged if the UK votes to leave the EU, or by in-fighting within the Conservative Party. Having re-negotiated Britain's deal with Europe and, effectively, led the 'stay' campaign, his medium-term prospects would be poor if the country rejected his renegotiation.

Jeremy Corbyn's biggest test comes in May. If Labour does very badly in Scotland and Wales and/or fails to win the London mayoral contest, he may face a challenge. A net loss of council seats would similarly be a bad showing for an Opposition party and almost unprecedented outside of a General Election year.

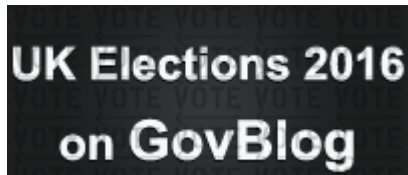
2016 elections key to the 'near future' of British Politics

Judgements about the parties' performance in the May elections will be more challenging, because the different dates on which they were previously fought makes it harder to use them as benchmarks. Parliamentary and assembly elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were last fought in 2011, the previous round of London and local elections took place in May 2012, while the first-ever police commissioner contests occurred in November 2012.



Over the coming weeks British Government @ LSE will be publishing articles on the local, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish elections and EU Referendum for the Department of Government’s ‘**UK Elections 2016**’ series. These pieces are intended to inform readers about the issues and political positions at stake. We hope these will provide a comprehensive round-up of the challenges facing major and smaller parties.

Taken together, the 2016 round of elections will provide vital evidence about the near future of British politics.



UK Elections 2016 on GovBlog

For the latest analysis of 2016’s electoral contests, go to **UK Elections 2016** on GovBlog.



Tony Travers is a Visiting Professor in the LSE Department of Government and Director of **LSE London**, a research centre at the London School of Economics.



Martin Rogers is a recent graduate of the Department of Social Policy at the LSE and host of the LSE Department of Government’s video series **The HotSeat**

Follow Martin on Twitter – **@MNB Rogers**

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